

## COMMITTEE OF LIAISON

*with Families of Servicemen Detained in North Vietnam*

385 West 42nd Street New York N.Y. 10026

212-765-1490

January, 1970

### INFORMATION SHEET

**Co-Chairmen:**  
Sam Bellamy  
Gus Weiss

**Members:**  
Mr. Aron Sussman

**Committee in formation:**  
Frank Berk  
Mr. Richard Foreman  
Shirley Godes  
Steve Hildner  
Robert Menden  
Prof. Ben Solomon  
David Taylor  
Barbara Weber  
Paul Young  
and

In the course of the Vietnam war, links have been built between the people of Vietnam and Americans who oppose the war through numerous meetings and conferences. These meetings have taken place in Europe, Canada, Cuba and Southeast Asia and have included people from both the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam) and the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam (now part of the Provisional Revolutionary Government).

In these meetings the Vietnamese have always stressed a distinction between the U.S. government, whom they hold responsible for the policy of war, and the U.S. people, whom they believe still value the goals upon which this country was founded—Independence, justice, freedom and equality. This same distinction is evident to those Americans who have visited North Vietnam and found that even though the nation is armed to defend itself, the people are encouraged by their government to believe that the American people are basically decent and humane.

It is therefore understandable that the Vietnamese should indicate their basic confidence in the American people through the peace movement which they believe embodies American ideals, rather than the government. And in the past, the Vietnamese have asked the peace movement to receive U.S. servicemen—primarily pilots whose planes were shot down—when the North Vietnamese government has decided to release them. On three separate occasions—February 1968, July 1968 and July 1969—the peace movement has gone to Hanoi and returned with released servicemen; on one occasion an American peace activist went to Phnom Penh, Cambodia to receive three released NLF captives.

In addition, Americans visiting Hanoi have frequently carried letters there at the request of families, and have brought back letters from servicemen. There have also been occasions when American peace activists have met prisoners and talked with them.

### Functions of the Committee

A Committee of Liaison has now been established as an extension of these past efforts at the request of the North Vietnamese. As on past occasions, the peace movement is responding to a request by the Vietnamese to meet a specific, immediate need and is not in any sense representing the government of North Vietnam.

The Committee will seek to facilitate communication between families in the U.S. and servicemen now imprisoned in North Vietnam. Basically, the Committee will receive letters from servicemen and forward them through the domestic mails, thereby decreasing, we hope, past problems in the receipt of such mail. We will also forward letters to North Vietnam at the request of relatives. Families are of course still free to send letters and parcels directly but should note that the instructions on mailing previously issued by the State Department are wrong. The correct address is:

name of serviceman  
serial number  
Camp of Detention of U.S. Pilots  
Captured in the D.R.V.  
Hanoi, Democratic Republic of Vietnam

via Moscow, U.S.S.R.



## **INFORMATION SHEET - page 2**

requests for information about servicemen from families who are uncertain if their relatives are being held in North Vietnam. Requests should be submitted to the Committee, but there is no certainty when and if the North Vietnamese will be able to respond. The Committee will of course transmit immediately any information that it receives to the family.

### **Clarification**

Two clarifications are in order: First, it should be noted that the Committee will be dealing solely with the government of North Vietnam and will not have any information on men held in South Vietnam by the Provisional Revolutionary Government. Nor will we be able to provide information at this time concerning men held in Laos or any other Southeast Asian country where U.S. troops and aircraft are presently involved in combat missions.

Secondly, the Committee will function entirely apart from the U.S. government. The U.S. government has frequently made it more difficult for the Vietnamese to be open to the concerns of American families by using the families' genuine desires as a propaganda ploy. The government has further attempted to provoke an angry response from the Vietnamese by publicizing unsubstantiated and inflammatory testimony from fliers already released: apparently, the government has decided to jeopardize existing communications and the possibility of future releases for the sake of propaganda aimed at prolonging the war. The North Vietnamese are also very aware that the U.S. government's claims of humanitarian concerns are contradicted by the well-documented policy of torture and brutality practiced on prisoners taken in the South by U.S. and Saigon troops.

In addition to all these factors, there is the simple fact that the resolution of the fate of all the servicemen now held in North Vietnam waits ultimately upon a U.S. decision to end the war and withdraw all its forces and materiel.

### **Who We Are**

We firmly believe that the safe return of these men and the half million others that the U.S. maintains in South Vietnam, Laos, Thailand and aboard naval vessels--who can also be viewed as prisoners, prisoners of their own government since many have been sent to fight in a war against the dictates of their own conscience--can only come with a decision on the part of the U.S. government to withdraw from Vietnam. Because of this conviction, we who are serving on this Committee will continue our efforts to create popular pressure strong enough to force the government to withdraw.

We are active in a variety of organizations committed to ending the war: American Friends Service Committee, the New Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam, Clergy and Laymen Concerned about Vietnam, Women Strike for Peace, The Conspiracy, and Women Against Daddy Warbucks. The Committee is supported by donations from individuals and organizations, and welcomes any gifts to sustain its work.

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b7c  
Mrs. [REDACTED] stated that she sent the following message to the above Committee of Liaison under date of February 4, 1970:

"Sirs:

E.O. 12812-2  
"I am in receipt of the November letter you forwarded from my husband and the card with the brief message written I assume in December. I am looking forward to receiving my January letter.

b7c  
[REDACTED]  
Virginia  
United States of America"

She related that she had received the above-indicated correspondence from her husband, and presumably through the above-mentioned Committee of Liaison. She advised that although she is most anxious to continue to receive mail from her husband, she has no intention of sending mail to him through the Committee of Liaison.

On March 26, 1970, Reverend Ben Duff, Eastern Shore Chapel, 2210 Larkin Road, Virginia Beach, Virginia, contacted the Norfolk Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and advised as follows:

For some time he has been interested in methods of obtaining information concerning American prisoners of war held by the North Vietnamese. He stated that a number of wives of these prisoners reside in Virginia Beach, and are obviously quite concerned about their husbands' welfare, and are anxious to send their husbands mail and receive mail from them.

He is aware that Reverend RICHARD FERNANDEZ, a Congregationalist Minister in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is affiliated with an organization known as the Clergy and Laymen Concerned for Peace in Vietnam, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, New York.



He learned of Reverend FERNANDEZ through [redacted] at [redacted]. He contacted [redacted] to request him to ask Reverend FERNANDEZ to have a meeting with Mr. [redacted] and several other wives of American prisoners of war in an effort to determine if Reverend Fernandez could assist in any way in establishing lines of communication between the wives and the prisoners.

As a result, Reverend FERNANDEZ came to Virginia Beach, and he met with Reverend [redacted] and several of these wives at the home of Mrs. [redacted]. He stated that Mrs. [redacted] is Area Coordinator of the National League of Families of American Prisoners in Southeast Asia.

At the meeting, which was held on March 24, 1970, a discussion ensued as to how Reverend FERNANDEZ could assist these wives in contacting their husbands. The wives present gave Reverend FERNANDEZ several letters which they requested him to attempt to deliver to their husbands inasmuch as he was going to Hanoi. Reverend FERNANDEZ stated that he felt that his visit to Hanoi would be productive, and he hoped that he would be successful in arranging for letters to be regularly exchanged between the wives and their husbands.

Reverend DUFFEY further stated that he has heard that CORA WEISS of the Women Strike for Peace is also affiliated with the Clergy and Laymen Concerned for Peace in Vietnam. (See page 125 for current interview of DUFFEY.)

The April 4, 1970, issue of "The Ledger-Star," a daily newspaper in Norfolk, Virginia, contains an article which reads as follows:

"POW Wives Decline  
Husbands' Letters"



"Two prisoner of war wives from Virginia Beach announced Tuesday they will refuse to accept any more letters from their husbands forwarded from Vietnam by the Women's Strike for Peace committee.

"The Two women said also that they plan to go April 21 to Geneva, Switzerland, in an effort to enlist the aid of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

"They are Mrs. Arthur Doss, wife of Lt. Cdr. Dale Doss, and Mrs. Sue Shuman, wife of Cdr. Edwin Shuman. Their husbands are Navy pilots who were flying together when shot down over North Vietnam and taken prisoners.

"Mrs. Doss told a news conference convened in a House of Representatives office building: 'I can no longer allow my husband's precious letters to be used as a device for torture and torment' of U. S. prisoner of war wives.

"The Women's Strike for Peace is an organization headed by an American, Mrs. Cora Weiss. Mrs. Weiss visited North Vietnam last year at the invitation of a North Vietnamese women's organization.

"Mrs. Weiss' Women's Strike for Peace has since become the only regular channel through which the North Vietnamese have been permitting communication between American prisoners of war and the POWs' relatives in the United States."

On April 23, 1970, Mrs. [REDACTED] advised as follows:

In March, 1970, she became aware through the press media that Reverend RICHARD FERNANDEZ of the Clergy and Laymen Concerned for Peace in Vietnam was planning to visit Hanoi and talk with American prisoners of war. Because she is very anxious

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to establish lines of communication between American prisoners of war and their families, she thought it best to talk to Reverend FERNANDEZ.

She contacted Reverend BEN DUFFEY, who is acquainted with another minister who knows Reverend FERNANDEZ quite well. When the third party contacted Reverend FERNANDEZ, the latter said he was anxious to meet her. Mrs. [REDACTED] stated that she would be willing to fly to either Philadelphia or New York to meet him. Reverend FERNANDEZ, however, told Reverend DUFFEY that he would come to Virginia Beach to meet with a few of the wives. b2c

Mrs. [REDACTED] then talked with Reverend FERNANDEZ and told him that there were about twenty wives in Virginia Beach and several more in Hampton, Virginia, who would be interested in talking with him. He said, however, that this was too great a number, so they then agreed on having about eight wives meet with him at Mrs. [REDACTED] home. b2c

Reverend FERNANDEZ then came to [REDACTED] and a meeting was held with him, Reverend [REDACTED] Mrs. [REDACTED] and four other wives at Mrs. [REDACTED] home. b2c

The wives gave him several letters which they requested him to deliver to their husbands in North Vietnam, and he was also requested to attempt to obtain information on several men who were missing in action and on whom no definite word had been received as to whether they were prisoners or not. Reverend FERNANDEZ stated he would cooperate to the best of his ability to deliver the mail, obtain information concerning these men, and establish more effective lines for exchanging mail between the wives and their husbands.

Reverend FERNANDEZ stated that he felt certain that he would be able to see some of the men being held prisoners.



Reverend FERNANDEZ stated that he is fully aware of the lack of cooperation on the part of the North Vietnamese in regard to furnishing information on the prisoners of war, but he appeared to be optimistic in his dealings with them notwithstanding.

Reverend FERNANDEZ impressed Mrs. [REDACTED] as being definitely "anti-war," but "certainly not anti-American." b7c

He stated he had never previously been to Hanoi, but that he had met the head of the North Vietnamese delegation in Paris.

Following this meeting, Reverend FERNANDEZ did go to Hanoi and he has since returned. Mrs. [REDACTED] has not contacted him since that time, but she feels certain that he did not see her husband, [REDACTED] b7c

Reverend FERNANDEZ subsequently talked with [REDACTED] whose husband, [REDACTED] is a prisoner of war. He told Mrs. [REDACTED] that while in Hanoi he had talked with her husband and two other prisoners. He told her it was quite apparent that the three men were obviously prompted by their captors as to what they could say to him in the interview. He also told Mrs. [REDACTED] that he talked to the North Vietnamese about the peace groups and the peace movement in the United States. b7c

He stated that the North Vietnamese told him that they felt that members of the peace groups were most representative of Americans today. The North Vietnamese stated they wanted representatives of peace groups to come to Hanoi to see how the North Vietnamese live and how gentle they are. b7c

Reverend FERNANDEZ also told Mrs. [REDACTED] that he planned to release the text of his interviews with the three prisoners to the news media, but Mrs. [REDACTED] has no knowledge that this has been done. b7c

Reverend FERNANDEZ also mentioned that he is the head of the Clergy and Laymen Concerned for Peace in Vietnam. He stated that Hanoi had formed this group and actually picked its members. He further commented that he has no respect for DAVID DELLINGER and RENE DAVIS who are in that group, and he noted that there is a distinct lack of communication among the officials in that group. (Mrs. [REDACTED] later advised that FERNANDEZ actually stated that Hanoi had formed COLIFAM and not the above group.) b7c

Mrs. [REDACTED] stated that she has not received any mail from her husband in the last several months. b7c

She further stated that Mrs. [REDACTED] and Mrs. [REDACTED] wives of prisoners mentioned in the above newspaper article, were not present at her home during the meeting with Reverend FERNANDEZ. She stated that both of these women had been acting independently in their efforts to exchange mail with their husbands and obtain information concerning them, and are not cooperating in the group which Mrs. [REDACTED] represents. b7c

Mrs. [REDACTED] stated that she realizes that the Women Strike for Peace is obviously using the Navy wives as a propaganda sounding board, but she personally hates to refuse their assistance inasmuch as they appear to have provided means of getting mail through. b7c

Mrs. [REDACTED] advised as follows on May 28, 1970: b7c

On May 17 and 25, 1970, she had telephonic conversations with Reverend RICHARD FERNANDEZ of the Clergy and Laymen Concerned for Peace in Vietnam. b7c

During the first contact, Mrs. [REDACTED] invited him to return [REDACTED] to again meet with various wives of prisoners of war in North Vietnam as she felt that they would be interested in hearing the results of his recent visit to Hanoi.



During a previous meeting with such wives in Virginia Beach, he had promised them that he would cooperate to the best of his ability to deliver mail to the prisoners which the wives had given him and obtain information concerning those prisoners as well as establish more effective channels for exchanging mail between the wives and their husbands.

During his appearance in [REDACTED] Mrs. [REDACTED] had given Reverend FERNANDEZ the names of 87 men who were either prisoners of war or missing in action in North Vietnam. FERNANDEZ told Mrs. [REDACTED] that he took the names of these men with him as well as the names of a considerable number of other possible prisoners of war. On arriving in Stockholm, Sweden, representatives of Hanoi had a list of 335 persons who were allegedly prisoners of war, and he was advised that all of these men had had opportunities to write letters to their relatives in the United States. On receiving that list, he consolidated Hanoi's list with his own list of names.

When FERNANDEZ arrived in Hanoi, he gave them the names of numerous men whose fate had not been indicated to him and whose names did not appear among the 335 prisoners. Hanoi, however, declined to furnish any information concerning those men.

FERNANDEZ related that he was unhappy over his treatment in Hanoi and stated he was denied permission to talk with the prison commander in Hanoi but had talked with a Commander Quat (phonetic) whose role was unknown to him.

FERNANDEZ stated that he did talk with three prisoners of war and these included a Marine, a member of the Air Force, and a member of the Navy, for three-fourths of an hour.

When he returned to the United States, he met with the Committee of Liaison with Families of Servicemen Detained in North Vietnam (COLIFAM) and during the ensuing discussion, it was agreed that Hanoi was not

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living up to its agreement with COLIFAM because Hanoi was not giving the names of all of the prisoners of war and had failed to give information on some of the names on Mrs. [REDACTED] list of 82. b2c

During the second contact, May 25, 1970, FERNANDEZ related that four students had just returned from Hanoi but had obtained no information of value on the prisoners of war. He told her that COLIFAM was having many internal problems. He then indicated that another group might go to Hanoi in July and that he would accompany such group. FERNANDEZ then suggested that perhaps Mrs. [REDACTED] might go along with him as his wife. She did not know if he was being facetious or not. b2c

FERNANDEZ said that he was certain that Hanoi had many more prisoners of war than the 335 prisoners on the aforementioned list, and he again expressed extreme displeasure over his inability to see the prison commander.

FERNANDEZ said the three prisoners of war that he did see were obviously briefed as to what they could say, and he expressed displeasure about this.

b2c FERNANDEZ stated that he would telephone Mrs. [REDACTED] when he learned the date the July group planned to go to Hanoi so that he could take with him some letters from wives to their prisoner husbands.

Mrs. [REDACTED] also related that FERNANDEZ had brought back with him a letter for her from her husband dated February 27, 1970, which her husband had apparently written on January 2, 1970. She had received that letter several weeks ago.

She further indicated that she has had no contact with the WSFP and has no plans to contact that organization in the near future.



## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 6/17/70

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*b2c*  
 Mrs. [REDACTED]  
 Virginia, was contacted, and she advised as follows:

*b2c*  
 She is the wife of [REDACTED]  
 U. S. Navy, who was shot down while in combat over North Vietnam  
 on [REDACTED] 1966. She and [REDACTED] have [REDACTED] children.

*b2c*  
 In March, 1970, she became aware through articles in the press that Reverend RICHARD FERNANDEZ of the Clergy and Laymen Concerned for Peace in Vietnam and also affiliated with the Committee of Liaison with Families of Servicemen Detained in North Vietnam (COLIFAM), had planned to visit Hanoi and talk with American prisoners of war. She was very desirous of talking with FERNANDEZ because she wanted to establish lines of communication between American prisoners of war and their families.

*b2c*  
 She contacted Reverend BEN DUFFEY and through him arranged to have FERNANDEZ come [REDACTED] to meet with a few of the wives of the prisoners of war in North Vietnam.

*b2c*  
 After Mrs. [REDACTED] talked with FERNANDEZ, they agreed for him to meet at Mrs. [REDACTED] home with several wives.

*b2c*  
 Reverend FERNANDEZ then came [REDACTED] and a meeting was held with him and Reverend DUFFEY at Mrs. [REDACTED] home. In addition, the following wives of prisoners of war were present:

*b2c*  
 Wife of [REDACTED]

*b2c*  
 Virginia

*b2c*  
 Wife of [REDACTED]

*b2c*  
 Virginia

On 6/11/70 at [REDACTED] Virginia File # Norfolk 100-6833

by SA [REDACTED] Date dictated 6/16/70

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Wife of [REDACTED] b2c

[REDACTED] Virginia

[REDACTED] Virginia. b2c

The wives gave FERNANDEZ several letters which they requested him to deliver to their husbands in North Vietnam, and he was also requested to endeavor to obtain information on several men who were missing in action and on whom no definite word had been received as to whether or not they were prisoners. FERNANDEZ stated he would cooperate to the best of his ability to deliver the mail, obtain information concerning the men, and establish more effective lines for exchanging mail between the wives and their husbands.

She stated that at the meeting with the wives, FERNANDEZ advised that Hanoi had formed COLIFAM and had actually selected its members. In fact, he stated this several times although he furnished no specific information in that regard.

FERNANDEZ had previously advised that he was the head of the Clergy and Laymen Concerned for Peace in Vietnam.

FERNANDEZ stated that Hanoi sends letters from the prisoners to COLIFAM and then COLIFAM sends the letters to the wives.

FERNANDEZ can be reached at 3400 Baring Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, telephone 215-EV7-4137. His New York telephone number is 212-749-8519.

Mrs. [REDACTED] also stated that on or about June 1, 1970, FERNANDEZ had called her and stated that he had met with STEWART HEACHAM, a member of COLIFAM. It was decided that three members of the American Friends Service Committee from Seattle would leave the early part of the second week in June, 1970, for Vietnam. One of those persons going was a KENNETH KILPATRICK, 814 Northwest 40th Street, Seattle, Washington. b2c



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b7c  
Mrs. [REDACTED] asked FERNANDEZ if this group was going over in an attempt to settle any differences between COLIPAM and Hanoi, but FERNANDEZ hedged on his answer.

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Mrs. [REDACTED] further stated she recently sent FERNANDEZ another list of men consisting of about twenty-seven names. These included known prisoners of war as well as several men missing in action. She wanted him to inquire as to why these particular prisoners of war had not written to their wives and also whether or not Hanoi had any definite information on those men missing in action.

She stated that FERNANDEZ told her he was not going to Hanoi on this particular occasion.

b7c  
Mrs. [REDACTED] advised that a number of wives of prisoners of war (POW) and men missing in action (MIA) reside in the Norfolk - Virginia Beach area and most of them belong to an organization known as National League of Families of American Prisoners in Southeast Asia, whose headquarters are located in Washington, D. C., at #1 Constitution Avenue, Northeast, Washington, D. C.

b7c  
Mrs. [REDACTED] advised that the following local women belong to this organization:

b7c  
Mrs. [REDACTED] wife of [REDACTED] United States Naval Reserves, [REDACTED] MIA

b7c  
Mrs. [REDACTED] wife of [REDACTED] United States Navy, [REDACTED] POW

b7c  
Mrs. [REDACTED] wife of [REDACTED] United States Air Force, [REDACTED] POW

b7c  
Mrs. [REDACTED] wife of [REDACTED] United States Navy, [REDACTED] MIA

b7c

Mrs. [REDACTED]

wife of [REDACTED]  
United States Navy, [REDACTED]

MRS. [REDACTED]

wife of [REDACTED]  
United States Navy, [REDACTED]

POW

Mrs. [REDACTED]

wife of [REDACTED]  
United States Navy, [REDACTED]

Mrs. [REDACTED]

wife of [REDACTED]  
United States Navy, [REDACTED]

MIA

wife of [REDACTED]  
United States Navy, [REDACTED]

POW

Mrs. [REDACTED]

wife of [REDACTED]  
United States Navy, [REDACTED]

POW

Mrs. [REDACTED]

wife of [REDACTED]  
United States Navy, [REDACTED]

MIA

Mrs. [REDACTED]

wife of [REDACTED]  
United States Navy, [REDACTED]

MIA. (She reportedly

Mrs. [REDACTED]

wife of [REDACTED]  
United States Navy, [REDACTED]

Mrs. [REDACTED]

wife of [REDACTED]  
United States Navy, [REDACTED]

MIA

Mrs. [REDACTED]

wife of [REDACTED]  
United States Navy, [REDACTED]

POW

E.O. 12812-2

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Mrs. [REDACTED] wife of [REDACTED]  
United States Navy, [REDACTED] POW b7c

Mrs. [REDACTED] wife of [REDACTED] b7c  
United States Navy, [REDACTED] MIA

Mrs. [REDACTED] wife of [REDACTED]  
United States Navy, [REDACTED] MIA

Mrs. [REDACTED] wife of [REDACTED] b7c  
United States Navy, [REDACTED] MIA. (She had  
met with Attorney WILLIAM KUNSTLER.)

Mrs. [REDACTED] wife of [REDACTED] b7c  
United States Navy, [REDACTED] MIA

Mrs. [REDACTED] wife of [REDACTED]  
United States Navy, [REDACTED] POW b7c

Mrs. [REDACTED] wife of [REDACTED]  
United States Navy, [REDACTED] MIA

Mrs. [REDACTED] wife of [REDACTED]  
United States Naval Reserves  
POW (This woman had met with DAVID DELLINGER.)

Mrs. [REDACTED] wife of [REDACTED]  
United States Navy, [REDACTED] POW

Mrs. [REDACTED] wife of [REDACTED] b7c  
United States Navy, [REDACTED] MIA

A copy of recent correspondence received and prepared  
by Mrs. [REDACTED] follows:

b7c



MF 100-6883

6

November 23, 1969

Dear Mrs. [REDACTED],

Enclosed you will find a letter addressed to my husband who has been a prisoner in North Vietnam for 3 years and 8 months. I would appreciate your taking this with you on your trip to Hanoi in hopes that it will be delivered to my husband.

I am also enclosing a copy of a letter you sent me a year and a half ago. As you know there has been a total bombing halt in North Vietnam for over a year, and yet, in spite of the promises of Ambassador Thuy, the North Vietnamese have repeatedly refused to even discuss a list of prisoners, inspection of camps, regular mail, AND immediate exchange of the sick and wounded. You speak of credibility in your letter to me - how are we to believe anything that the North Vietnamese government promises when most of our wives and mothers aren't even given the simple request of whether their husband or son is alive?

To deny the basic human rights of individuals, is to divorce yourself from the civilized world, and no country, no matter what their beliefs want to be condemned by the nations of the world. I do hope on your trip into Hanoi that perhaps your group will be allowed to visit all the camps and all the prisoners. I believe this should be rather a simple request, IF the men are being treated as humanely as they would have the world believe.

Gratefully,

Enclosures



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20 S. 12th Street • Philadelphia, Pa. 19107 • Telephone: LO 4-5570-1

December 17, 1969

Dear

I have just returned from Hanoi and the officials there were preparing to mail letters to a group of prisoner's families. They asked me if I would take them back to the States to insure quicker delivery. Needless to say I was delighted to comply and am enclosing the letter addressed to you.

MEMBER OF SUBJECT ORGANIZATION

*Ethel Taylor*

Ethel Taylor  
1505 Ashford Way  
Philadelphia, Pa. 19151  
215-642-9078

*Mrs. W. L. Taylor*

Mrs. [REDACTED]

E.O. 12812-2

This is not in reply to the letter you forwarded to me. I delivered your letter to the authorities in Hanoi with a request that it be delivered promptly.

NP 100-6833

B

AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE INC.

HENRY SEBERT  
Chairman  
HENRY J. CADSWY  
President  
BRONSON P. CLARK  
Executive Secretary



160 North Fifteenth Street  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102  
Phone 215-553-9372

January 20, 1970

Dear Friend,

I am happy to report that during my visit to North Vietnam between December 26, 1969, and January 9, 1970, I was able to deliver to the representatives of the Vietmy (Viet Nam Committee for Solidarity with American People) about 500 letters that had been forwarded on to me by you and other family members of prisoners of war in North Vietnam.

Immediately prior to my departure from North Vietnam I was given 69 letters from 64 American prisoners of war, and in keeping with the North Vietnamese request these letters have been given to the

Committee of Liaison  
with Families of Service  
men detained in North  
Vietnam  
365 W. 42nd Street  
New York, New York

for transmittal to the individual addressees. We at the American Friends Service Committee are pleased to have had a part in opening a channel for communication between the prisoners and their families and hope that this will continue.

You may be interested to know that during my visit to North Vietnam I was able to deliver a second contribution of open heart surgical equipment to the Binh Vien Viet-Duc Hospital in Hanoi in keeping with a long-standing Quaker concern for civilian sufferers on both sides of a war.

Following my departure from North Vietnam I traveled on to Quang Ngai in South Vietnam to visit the American Friends Service Committee (Quaker) rehabilitation project for civilian casualties.

I have asked my colleagues in Philadelphia to mail this letter to you prior to my return to the United States, so that you might know more promptly that your letter has safely arrived in Hanoi and was given to the appropriate North Vietnamese authorities with my specific request that it be delivered to the individual addressee.

Most sincerely yours,

for: Louis W. Schneider  
Roger G. Fredrickson

EF/a



NF 100-6833

10 a.m. Tuesday, January 27th  
Cannon House Office Building  
1st Street & Independence Ave.  
Caucus Room 345

NY 100-6833  
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You are invited to meet Cora Weiss and members of Congress to hear her first-hand report from Hanoi.

Mrs. Weiss went to Hanoi for 17 days in December at the invitation of the Vietnam Women's Union. She had extensive interviews with the North Vietnamese Prime Minister, with captured U.S. pilots, and with survivors from My Lai. She also travelled through bombed-out villages in North Vietnam "seeing first-hand what this nation has wrought." The 138 letters from imprisoned G.I.s that the women brought back were in some cases the first word their families had received from them in several years.

Cora Weiss, a leader of Women Strike for Peace, was Co-Chairman of the recent Mobilization March on Washington.

SPONSORED BY WOMEN STRIKE FOR PEACE

PLEASE NOTE:

Mrs. Weiss will also speak on Tuesday evening, January 27, at 8:00 P.M., at the Washington Ethical Society, 7750 16th Street, N.W. The public is invited to attend.

Co-sponsors:  
Washington Ethical Society  
Women Strike for Peace



NF 100-6833

11 March 1970

## COMMITTEE OF LIAISON

with Families of Servicemen Detained in North Vietnam

365 West 42nd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036

(212) 765-1492

CABLE ADDRESS:  
COLIAPAM

Co-chairmen: Dr. DIOD JELLINGER  
David Jellinger  
Cord Weiss

Treasurer:

Mrs. Anna Bennett

Committee

Richard J. Bennett

Rennie Davis

Madeline Duckles

Prof. Richard Felt

Rev. Richard Fernandez

Norman Fruchter

\*Maggie Gaddes

Steve Halliwell

Prof. Donald Kalish

Stewart Metchum

Prof. Ben Shtemen

Prof. Frank Schumann

Ethel Taylor

\*Barbara Webster

Todd Young

\*staff

April 20, 1970

Dear Mas [redacted] b2c

Rev. Richard Fernandez, a member of the Committee of Liaison, returned today from a two-week trip to Laos and North Vietnam. He brought back the enclosed letter along with 201 others from prisoners being held in North Vietnam.

While there, Rev. Fernandez held a lengthy interview with three pilots, Cdr. Robert Schweitzer, Cdr. Walter Wilber and Lt. Col. Edison Miller. He also was advised by North Vietnamese authorities that families should write letters monthly on the enclosed air-letter forms. We are therefore sending several to you at this time and will send more with subsequent mail.

We are of course very pleased to be able to forward this letter to you.

Sincerely yours,

*Steven E. Halliwell*  
Steven E. Halliwell  
Steve Halliwell

# COMMITTEE OF LIAISON

## with Families of Servicemen Detained in North Vietnam

365 West 42nd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036

(212) 765-1490

CABLE ADDRESS:  
COLIAPAM

May 4, 1970

Co-chairmen:  
Dave Dellinger  
Core Weiss

Treasurer:  
Mrs. Anne Bennett

Committee  
Richard J. Barnett  
Reanie Davis  
Modeline Duckles  
Prof. Richard Falk  
Rev. Richard Fernandez  
Norman Fruchter  
Maggie Geddes  
Steve Halliwell  
Prof. Donald Kalish  
Stewart Maccham  
Prof. Ben Seitzman  
Prof. Franz Schurmann  
Ethel Taylor  
Barbara Webster  
Trudi Young

From: Rev. Richard Fernandez  
To: The families of the 335 presently confirmed prisoners held in North Vietnam  
Re: Information on correspondence with prisoners

On April 20th I returned from a three-week trip to Laos and North Vietnam. In North Vietnam I spoke with officials responsible for communication between pilots held in detention there and their families here. The following information was emphasized to me by the North Vietnamese authorities and we are anxious to make sure that you are aware of it:

- 1) The Vietnamese recommend that families use the air-letter form (enclosed) for correspondence.
- 2) Communication to pilots should be limited to matters of family and health.
- 3) Pilots are allowed to receive one letter per month and one package every other month (not over six pounds in weight).

Detention Camp authorities have said that they do not wish to receive several letters and/or packages per month for a given pilot from different members of the same family. Families should make arrangements for alternating letters each month if different members

went to write.

The North Vietnamese authorities indicated that, from this point forward, they will not feel responsible for forwarding letters and packages that do not adhere to the above.

If the letter form is mailed directly it can go in another envelope but the mail route, "via Moscow, U.S.S.R.," should definitely be included in the address. If letters are sent to the Committee of Liaison for forwarding please enclose but do not affix stamps as we send letters on in packets. The Committee cannot forward packages for families.

While I was in Hanoi, Prof. Douglas Dowd of Cornell University and I met with three pilots: Cdr. Robert Schweitzer of Lemoore, California; Cdr. Walter Wilbur of Virginia Beach and Lt. Col. Edison Miller of Santa Ana, California. The three men were in good health, and said they had daily exercise and reading material. The three pilots advised us that they had been getting letters and packages from their



Richard Fernandez memo - page 2

families, and asked that packages include toilet articles and canned foods. In particular they mentioned soap, shaving cream (no razors or blades), toothpaste, powdered milk and cream, instant coffee and non-melting candy. They said they do not need clothes.

Also, in my discussions with the Vietnam Committee of Solidarity with the American People, the Committee of Liaison's contact in North Vietnam, we confirmed that since December over 800 letters have been sent from Hanoi through the Committee of Liaison. Of those, 155 letters are still on their way from Hanoi to families here.

We hope that this information clarifies some aspects of correspondence for you. If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact us.

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 6/26/70  
*E.O. 12812-2* *62-*

Mrs. [REDACTED]

advised as follows:

She related that under the date of June 14, 1970, she received the following letter from the Committee of Liaison with Families of Servicemen Detained in North Vietnam, which enclosed another letter from her husband who is a prisoner of war in North Vietnam.

On 6/25/70

[REDACTED] Virginia

File # Norfolk 100-6833by SA [REDACTED] *62-*Date dictated 6/26/70*E.O. 12812-2*



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## with Families of Servicemen Detained in North Vietnam

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Treasurer:  
Mrs. Anne Bennett

Committee (in formation):  
Rennie Davis  
Rev. Richard Fernandez  
\*Maggie Geddes  
\*Steve Holliswell  
Stewart Macdon  
Prof. Ben Seltzman  
Ethel Taylor  
\*Barbara Webster  
\*Trudi Young

\*staff

ED. 1887-2  
b2c  
Dear Mr. [REDACTED]

January 27, 1970

We assume that by this time you have received the letter from North Vietnam which was forwarded to you by members of our Committee. We are enclosing an Information Sheet which explains the work of the Committee of Liaison.

The North Vietnamese have said that prisoners will be able to receive and send one letter a month. As noted in the Information Sheet, you may send letters directly to North Vietnam (note the mail address and route). If you would like us to forward them for you, please enclose but do not affix stamps as we will be sending them on in packets. We are also enclosing a letter form which you might wish to use, whether you send it directly or through us. Prisoners can also receive one package, not over six pounds in weight, every other month.

To insure the safe and rapid delivery of mail from prisoners, the North Vietnamese will send periodic packets of letters through our office. The letters will then be dispatched immediately to the families to whom they are addressed.

The only way to secure the eventual release of prisoners is through the decision by the United States to end the war. But in the meantime we are pleased to be able to assist in the communication between men and their families. We hope to forward letters on to you again soon.

Sincerely,

*Maggie Geddes*  
Maggie Geddes



may\_VET\_IDated

**END (N.B.):**

1. Phải viết rõ và chỉ được viết trên những dòng kẻ sẵn (Write legibly and only on the lines).
2. Trong thư chỉ được nói về tình hình sức khỏe và tình hình gia đình (Write only about health and family).
3. Các thành gửi đến cũng phải theo đúng mẫu, khuôn khổ và quy định này (Letters from families should also conform to this format).



**NGƯỜI GỬI (Addressee)**

HỌ TÊN (Name in full):

SỐ QUÂN (Service number):

NGÀY VÀ NƠI SINH (Date & place of birth):

ĐỊA CHỈ (Address):

TRẠI GIAM PHI CÔNG MỸ BỊ BẮT TẠI  
 NƯỚC VIỆT-NAM DÂN CHỦ CỘNG HÒA  
 VIA MOSCOW, USSR  
 (Camp of detention for U.S. pilots captured  
 in the DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC of VIETNAM)

**COMMITTEE OF LIAISON**  
 with Families of Servicemen Detained in North Vietnam

**GỬI (Addressee)**

HỌ TÊN (Name in full):

ĐỊA CHỈ (Address):

# COMMITTEE OF LIAISON

with Families of Servicemen Detained in North Vietnam

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Stewart Meehan  
Prof. Ben Seitzman  
Prof. Franz Schurmann  
Ethel Taylor  
Barbara Webster  
Tredi Young

\*staff

April 20, 1970

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### Staff

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Richard Fernandez memo - page 2

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NY 100-6683

5

*Ex-100-2*  
*b7c*  
Mrs. [REDACTED] related that no information has come to her attention as to the manner in which COLIFAM was formed. She stated she will continue to accept any mail directed to her from COLIFAM, but she has no desire to correspond with them.

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 6/18/70

1  
E.O. 12812-2  
Mrs. [REDACTED] furnished the following information:

She is the wife of [REDACTED] U. S. Navy, who became a prisoner of war (POW) in North Vietnam on 1967. She learned of his status through the Department of the Navy the following day.

To date, she has received no letters from her husband; however, she did receive a letter from the Committee of Liaison with Families of Servicemen Detained in North Vietnam (COLIFAM) dated April 7, 1970, stating she would receive a letter. To date, it has not arrived.

In April, 1968, she obtained a picture of her husband through the Navy that the Navy had received in a film called "Pilots in Pajamas," which was put out by the East Germans as a propaganda film.

On several occasions, she had attempted to get mail to her husband through the Women Strike for Peace (WSPP). Frequently, the Navy advises the wives of the prisoners of war that certain individuals or organizations are going to Hanoi so many of the wives then forward the mail to them in an effort to have it delivered to their husbands.

She had learned in the latter part of 1969 that ETHEL TAYLOR of the WSPP was going to Hanoi, but she subsequently received a letter from Mrs. TAYLOR dated January 21, 1970, setting out that she did not bring back a letter for her. Mrs. TAYLOR's letter specifically pointed out that an organization has been set up between the Peace Movement and Hanoi specifically for the purpose of forwarding mail and forwarding inquiries regarding prisoners from the immediate family. The organization was identified as the Committee of Liaison with Families of Servicemen Detained in North Vietnam.

On 6/12/70 at [REDACTED] Virginia File # Norfolk 100-6833

by SA [REDACTED] E.O. 12812-2 Date dictated 6/17/70



NF 100-6033

2

She stated that she would accept mail from her husband through any means possible even if it is through COLIFAM.

She related that in the spring of 1969 several local wives of the prisoners of war met with Reverend RICHARD FERNANDEZ of COLIFAM at the home of Mrs. [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] b7c

In his remarks, FERNANDEZ gave the impression he was certainly more anti-war than anti-American. He expressed the opinion that the wives should attempt to effect communication with their husbands through Sweden "rather than this crap," meaning COLIFAM. He felt that Sweden would be more effective in getting a complete list of prisoners of war than any organization.

At the wives' meeting, FERNANDEZ stated he felt that if he brought over 181 letters to alleged POWs, he would be able to bring back information on 181 men. She gave FERNANDEZ a letter to take to her husband; however, he refused to accept a picture of her husband. (In this regard, Mrs. [REDACTED] stated that although she previously knew from the Navy that her husband was a POW, his name had not been released by Hanoi.) b7c

FERNANDEZ related that the POW issue was not his main reason for going to Hanoi, but that he was mainly interested in looking into the church situation there. All of the wives who were at the meeting presented their cases to FERNANDEZ and asked him to make specific inquiries concerning husbands.

FERNANDEZ did not discuss the formation of COLIFAM and gave no indication that it had been organized by Hanoi. He did not indicate how he happened to be associated with COLIFAM.

Mrs. [REDACTED] pointed out that after FERNANDEZ left [REDACTED] he later went to Hanoi via Stockholm, Sweden. After his arrival there, she received a telephone call from Mrs. ETHEL TAYLOR, who told her Hanoi had released the name of her husband as a prisoner.

NF 100-5833

3

*b2c*  
Mrs. TAYLOR told Mrs. [REDACTED] that she did not have any letter from her husband but that now that his name had been released, she would be getting a letter. After this, she received a letter from COLIFAM stating she would be getting some mail from her husband.

*b2c*  
Mrs. [REDACTED] stated that one week previously, she telephoned FERNANDEZ and asked him why she had not received a letter; and she stated he did not know why. He indicated, however, he would call STEWART MEACHAM of the American Friends Service Committee, who would have a Mr. KILPATRICK from that organization make a special request when KILPATRICK went to Hanoi.

*b2c*  
Mrs. [REDACTED] stated that the following persons were present at the meeting with FERNANDEZ at Mrs. [REDACTED] home:

*b2c*  
[REDACTED]  
*b2c*  
and herself.

*b2c*  
She stated [REDACTED] husband is in the Air Force and a POW, and she resides in [REDACTED]

The following is correspondence that Mrs. [REDACTED] has received from the WSFP and COLIFAM:

*b2c*





TWENTY SOUTH TWELFTH STREET

PHILADELPHIA, PA. 19107  
Telephone: 561-2636

January 21, 1970

Dear Mrs. [REDACTED] b7c

I am sorry that it has taken me so long to write to you but I've been waiting until I could make definite suggestions to you and now I am pleased to say I can.

I regret very much that I did not bring back a letter for you but now an organization has been set up between the Peace Movement and Hanoi specifically for the purpose of forwarding mail and forwarding inquiries regarding prisoners from the immediate family.

The organization is the Committee of Liaison With Families of Servicemen Detained in North Vietnam and is located at 365 W. 42nd Street, New York City, N.Y., 10036.

I am a member of this Committee. Please do not hesitate to contact me for any reason.

Cordially,

*Ethel Taylor*

Mrs. William Taylor

1505 Ashford Way  
Phila., Pa., 19151  
MI 2-9078 (Area Code 215)

P.S. You will shortly receive information directly from the Committee of Liaison with details of its operation.



# COMMITTEE OF LIAISON

## with Families of Servicemen Detained in North Vietnam

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Stewart Macdon  
Prof. Ben Seitzman  
Ethel Taylor  
\*Barbara Webster  
\*Trudi Young

\*staff

January 27, 1970

(212) 765-1490

Dear *Theresa*

Ethel Taylor, a member of our newly-formed committee, which will facilitate communication between American servicemen held in North Vietnam and their families, has asked us to contact you. We are enclosing an Information Sheet describing the Committee of Liaison.

We have also duplicated the enclosed letter form which you may wish to use in writing your relative. The North Vietnamese have said that prisoners can send and receive one letter per month and one package (not more than six pounds in weight) every other month. Note the address and mail route given in the Information Sheet.

If you would like us to try to find out if your relative is a prisoner in North Vietnam, send his full name, service number and any details you have on when and where he was shot down. We will then transmit the inquiry to the North Vietnamese and are hopeful of receiving a response to every request made.

It is important to understand that there undoubtedly were many pilots whose planes were shot down but whom the North Vietnamese could not rescue, and that there are prisoners held by the Provisional Revolutionary Government in South Vietnam and by the Pathet Lao in Laos about whom we are not able to get information.

We understand your anguish in not knowing about your relative and we sincerely hope we can be of help in getting information about him for you.

Sincerely,

*Barbara Webster*

Barbara Webster

P.S. We apologize for sending a mimeographed letter but we wanted to get this word to you as quickly as possible.